

Claims

- [c1] 1. A ball return apparatus to facilitate ball return or retrieval during play on a game table having a net, comprising an elongated first ramp member adapted to be positioned substantially parallel to and adjacent the net, said first ramp member being sloped to facilitate movement of a ball away from the net and towards a player when the ball hits the net during play of a game on the game table.
- [c2] 2. The ball return apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first ramp comprises a lower edge and said lower edge being adapted to contact a top surface of the table at a location spaced from said net.
- [c3] 3. The ball return apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first ramp member comprises at least one support element connected to a back side of said first ramp member and configured to support said first ramp member, said support element being adapted to contact said top surface.
- [c4] 4. The ball return apparatus as defined in claim 1, further comprising a first end bracket and a second end

bracket, said end brackets being connected to opposing ends of said first ramp member.

[c5] 5. The ball return apparatus of claim 4, wherein said first and second end brackets each comprise a deflecting surface extending substantially vertically above said first ramp member.

[c6] 6. The ball return apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an elongated second ramp member adapted to be positioned on an opposite side of the net from said first ramp member, said second ramp member being adapted to be positioned adjacent to and parallel to the net and comprising a lower edge spaced from said net.

[c7] 7. The ball return apparatus of claim 6, wherein said first and second ramp members are connected together at at least one location.

[c8] 8. The ball return apparatus of claim 7, wherein said connection comprises a connector member extending through the net and connected on one end to said first ramp member and on a second end to said second ramp member.

[c9] 9. The ball return apparatus of claim 7, wherein said connection comprises at least one hook.

- [c10] 10. The ball return apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first ramp member comprises a plurality of connectable sections.
- [c11] 11. The ball return apparatus of claim 10, wherein said plurality of ramp sections are frictionally connected together.
- [c12] 12. The ball return apparatus of claim 10, wherein said plurality of ramp sections are telescopingly connected.
- [c13] 13. The ball return apparatus of claim 6, wherein said second ramp member comprises at least one support element connected to a back side of said second ramp member and configured to support said second ramp member, said support member adapted to be supported on a top surface of the table.
- [c14] 14. The ball return apparatus as defined in claim 6, further comprising a first and second end bracket connected to said second ramp member.
- [c15] 15. The ball return apparatus of claim 14, wherein said first and second end brackets comprise a deflecting surface extending substantially vertically above said second ramp member.
- [c16] 16. A ball return apparatus to facilitate ball retrieval dur-

ing play on a game table having a net, comprising a first ramp member and a second ramp member adapted to be positioned on the game table on opposite sides of the net and substantially parallel and adjacent to the net, said first and second ramp members being sloped to facilitate movement of a ball away from the net and towards a player positioned at an end of the game table.

[c17] 17. The ball return apparatus of claim 16, further comprising a first end bracket and a second end bracket connected to opposite ends of said first and second ramp members and each comprising a deflecting surface extending substantially vertically above said first and second ramp members.

[c18] 18. The ball return apparatus of claim 17, wherein said first and second end brackets comprise an extension portion configured to direct the ball substantially toward the middle of the game table.

[c19] 19. The ball return apparatus of claim 17, wherein said extension portion is angled relative to said deflecting surface.

[c20] 20. The ball return apparatus of claim 16, wherein said first and second ramp members are connected together at at least one location along the length of said first and

second ramp members.

[c21] 21. The ball return apparatus of claim 20, wherein said connection extends through the net.

[c22] 22. The ball return apparatus of claim 16, wherein said first and second ramp members each comprise a support element connected to a back side, said support element configured to support said first and second ramp members on the game table.